ONLINE GAMING IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

A workbook for youth and young adults

Northern Ontario Gambling
RESEARCH HUB

St. Joseph's Care Group

GAMBLING RESEARCH
EXCHANGE ONTARIO
DRIVING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION

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Welcome

Please jot down a few thoughts about what you are hoping to accomplish with this workbook:

- Are you hoping to learn more about the risks associated with online gaming?

- Are you hoping to assess your own online gaming habits, to see if you may be at risk?

- Are you hoping to find resources for yourself or a loved one in respect to problems with online gaming?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

A self-assessment tool to educate on online gaming.

Layout

This workbook is meant for:

1. People who have questions or who are struggling with gaming.
2. Friends, or loved ones of someone who may be struggling with gaming.

Additional

Information on gambling and problem gambling, as they relate to gaming.

PROBLEM GAMING

Are you a gamer?

◯ **Yes**   ◯ **No**

If yes, what types of games do you play?

If yes, how often do you play?

The stats on gaming. [2]

23%

Of high school students play video games daily

9%

Of high school students play video games 5+ hours a day

12%

Of high school students may have a gaming problem

GAMING DISORDER

Gaming disorder is a pattern of gaming behavior ("digital-gaming" or "video-gaming") characterized by: [21]

Impaired control over gaming

Priority given to gaming over interests and daily activities

Continuation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences

Behaviour pattern is severe enough to result in impairment in important areas of functioning and has been evident for at least 12 months

Check your gaming.

In the last 6 months, how often: [12]

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. Have you thought all day long about playing a game?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
2. Have you played longer than you intended?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
3. Have you played games to forget about real life?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
4. Have others unsuccessfully tried to reduce your time spent on games?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
5. Have you felt upset when you were unable to play?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
6. Have you had arguments with others (e.g. family, friends) over your time spent on games?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
7. Have you neglected important activities (e.g. school, work) to play games?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Check your score.

Use your answers from questions 1 to 7 from the previous page:

ANSWER	ADD
• Never • Rarely	0 points
• Sometimes • Often • Very Often	1 point

☐ Your Score

Is your score 4 or higher?

Then you may be at risk for problematic gaming or online gaming addiction.[12]

WAS YOUR SCORE 4 OR HIGHER ON THE "CHECK YOUR GAMING" QUIZ?

If yes, then you **may** have issues with these:[18]

Nicotine

Gambling

Marijuana

Mental health

Alcohol

Any other drugs (e.g., cocaine)

Alcohol & Cannabis
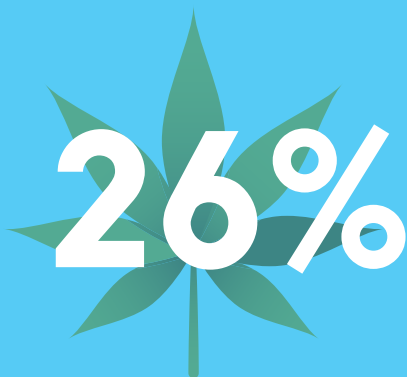## GAMERS AND GAMBLERS

Initial results from a recent study at Lakehead University found that: [14]

Alcohol ↑

More students who play video games **and** gamble reported drinking alcohol than students who don't gamble or game.

23%

Cannabis ↑

More students who play video games **and** gamble reported using cannabis than students who don't gamble or game.
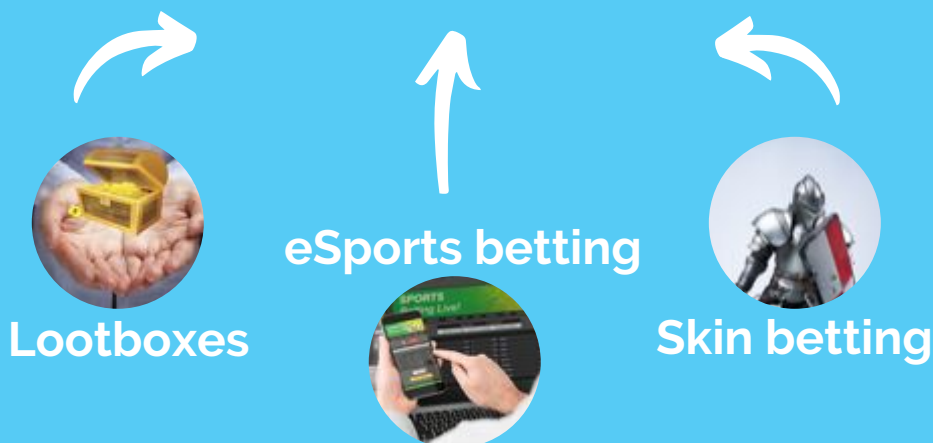
26%

Game-bling

An informal term to describe gambling content found in your most popular video games.

So someone could be gambling while they play video games without even realizing it.

Gambling

Lootboxes

eSports betting

Skin betting

You're making great progress. Keep it up!

25%

Completed.
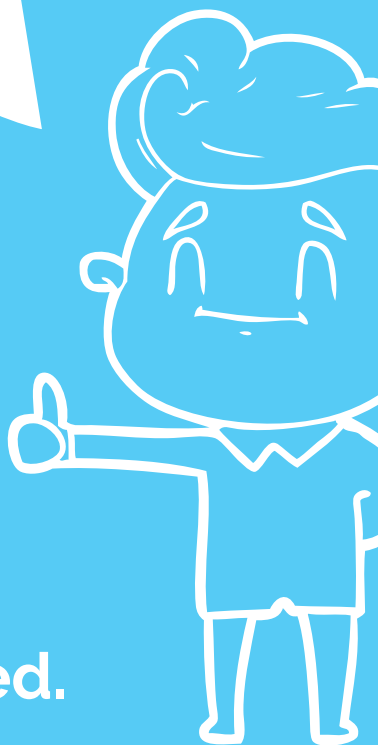
PROBLEM GAMBLING

PROBLEM GAMBLING

Gambling is when you risk something valuable to try and get something more valuable.[1][6]

Valuables are subjective.

For one person, it can be money. For another, it can be food, toys, or technology.

Gambling may become a problem when you:

Can't stop

Need to gamble more

Hide it from others.

Gambling in unexpected places.

54% of the top 100 Facebook games have gambling content in them.[11]

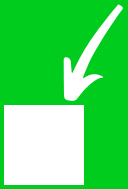How do I know if I'm gambling or not?

Find out how.

How to tell if a game involves gambling? [5]

Do you have to pay money to play?

⬜ YES   ⬜ NO

NOT GAMBLING

Can you play the game to win a $$$ prize?
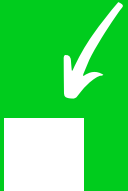
⬜ YES   ⬜ NO

NOT GAMBLING

Can you win the game based on skill?

⬜ YES   ⬜ NO

GAMBLING

18
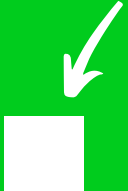
The stats on gambling.[2]

7%

Of high school students may have a gambling problem

2%

Of high school students may have a high-severity gambling problem

8%

Of high school students have gambled money on video games

Check your gambling.

1.During the past 12 months, have you become restless, irritable or anxious when trying to stop/cut down on gambling? [7]

◯ **No**　　　　◯ **Yes**

2. During the past 12 months, have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gambled? [7]

◯ **No**　　　　◯ **Yes**

3. During the past 12 months did you have such financial trouble as a result of your gambling that you had to get help with living expenses from family, friends, or welfare? [7]

◯ **No**　　　　◯ **Yes**

Check your score.

Use your answers from questions 1 to 3 from the previous page:

If you answered **"yes"** to **any of the questions,** you are **at risk** for **developing a gambling problem.**[7]

No adding needed here.

Woohoo! You're halfway there!

50%
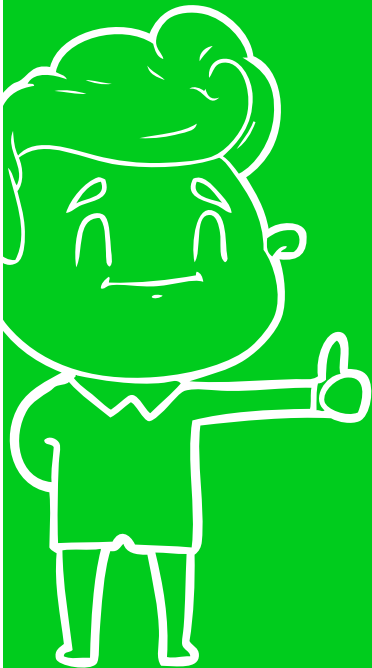
Completed.

MOBILE GAMES

What's considered a mobile game?

A **mobile game** is a **video game played on a mobile device.** For example, **a game on a smartphone** would be a mobile game.[9]

A mobile game
is not played on a:[9]

Xbox One

Playstation 4

Computer

24

Do you play mobile games?

◯ **Yes**   ◯ **No**

If yes, what types of mobile games do you play?
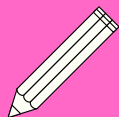
If yes, how often do you play?
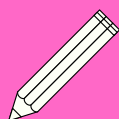
Mobile Games are Popular.

30% Of high school students spend **5+ hours** of free time on electronic devices daily, including time spent on mobile games.[2]

Mobile game popularity may be partly due to many games being free, but are they really?

✔ Many mobile games are free to download.

✖ However, many mobile games have in-app purchase options, which aren't free.

Why do so many people pay to play?

The game developers' perspective.
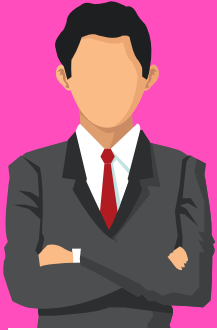
How do game developers increase their chances of a player choosing to pay to play a mobile game?

✔ By introducing **"free-mium"** games which **initially cost the player nothing.** [13] [16]

In order for these companies to still make money from gamers, game developers will add "In-app purchases" (IAP) to the game. [13] [16]

Buying digital products or services within an app on your mobile device. [10]

Example of IAP's:

Removing ads

Buying more lives

The gamers' perspective.

Why do gamers want to buy "in-app purchases (IAP's)"? [8]

✓ Unobstructed play ▶

Continue playing without obstructions. (e.g., Many free-mium games stop gamers from playing the game unless they use real money in order to continue playing.).

✓ Social Interaction

Social presentation and interaction (e.g., Some free-mium games require real money if a gamer wants to play with their friends.).

✓ Competition

Becoming the best player in a game (e.g., Some free-mium games allow gamers to use real money to have an advantage over other gamers in order to win the game.).

✓ Economic Rationale SALE

Good deals, supporting a good game, and investing in a hobby (e.g., Gamers may want to use real money if they think it is a good deal or to support a well made game.).

THE NORTH

Kenora   Thunder Bay

Do you live in Northern Ontario?

Fort Frances   Dryden

Or elsewhere!

Living in the North.

Life in the North has its own **unique challenges**. This extends to **online gaming** and **gaming addiction** in the North as well.

Some of the challenges include: [4]

Privacy Concerns

Boredom

Distance

Unique Challenges.

IN THE NORTH

Boredom [4]

Being far from large cities, and having fewer activities to do, may lead to gaming as one of the only readily available activities.

Privacy Concerns [4]

Small, tight-knit communities may have less privacy. This can be difficult when seeking help for a problem.

Distance [4]

Sometimes, the help-seeking resources you need are far away and difficult to access.

There may be challenges in the North, **but help is always there.**

Check out our resources page at the back of the book.

➡️

75%

Completed.
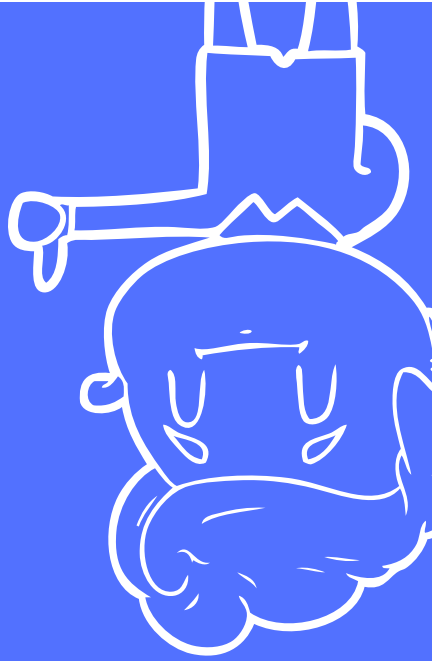
Congratulations! You're almost done!

SELF-ASSESSMENT

How are your habits?

After going through this workbook, do you think your gaming habits need to change?

◯ Yes   ◯ No

If yes, how ready are you to change? [15]

◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯
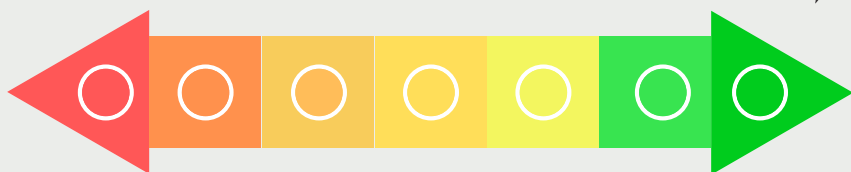
Not Ready   **Maybe**   **Ready**

Setting Limits.

Thinking about limiting your gaming? Write down the pros and cons of making this change: [15]

	Pros ✅	Cons ❌
Making a Change		
Not Making a Change		

Ready to make a change?

But not sure where to start?

Here are some tips to reduce gaming if it has become problematic:[3]

Set priorities (e.g., homework before gaming).

Turn off device(s) by a certain time each night.

Don't eat in front of your device(s).

Pay attention to how much time you are spending on your device(s).

Jot down some of your own ideas:
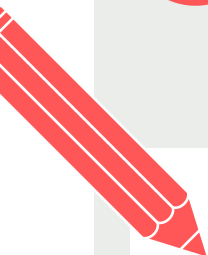
Final Thoughts.

You're almost done! Do you have any final thoughts? Did you accomplish what you hoped to?

PARENTS & TEACHERS

KNOW THE RISKS

of problem gaming or gaming addiction.

Only a small number of people reach the point of having a problem or an addiction. [21]

However, the World Health Organization recommends being alert to the following potential problem signs: [21]

1. Amount of time spent gaming

2. Excluding other daily activities

3. Changes in mental or physical health

4. Changes in social functioning

Tips for Parents

Encourage Social Interaction.

Model Good Behaviour.

What Can You Do To Help?[20]

Set Time Limits.

Teach Priorities.

Take Breaks Outside.
Encourage Physical Activity.

Is It Really Free?

More and more social media games or online games are **"Free-mium"**.

| FREE | + | PREMIUM |

This means that while the game may be free, many **elements within the game will cost money**.

These hidden costs can add up.

Gaming Terms.

**Want to understand what your child is talking about?
Learn some of the lingo!**
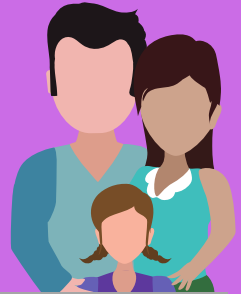
LINGO	PLAIN-ENGLISH
AAA	High quality games
Boss	Enemy you must defeat
Easter Egg	A hidden message
Gamertag	Online name/identity
GG	Good Game
Mod	Game Modifier
Noob	An inexperienced player
Ragequit	Quit due to negativity
Smurf	High-level player pretending to be low-level to beat noobs
Troll	Hassles other players

17

RESOURCES
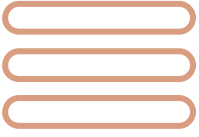
Gambling & Gaming Help

ConnexOntario

Addiction, Mental Health, and Problem Gambling Services

📞 1-866-531-2600

💻 www.connexontario.ca

Sister Margaret Smith Centre

Gambling & Behavioural Addictions Program

📞 807-684-5100

💻 www.sjcg.net

📍 Thunder Bay, ON

camh

Problem Gambling and Technology Use Treatment Services

📞 807-684-5100

💻 www.camh.ca

General Help & Information

Kids Help Phone

A 24/7 national support service for kids (Canada).

📞 1-800-668-6868

💻 www.kidshelpphone.ca

Good2Talk

A free, confidential helpline for post-secondary students in Ontario.

📞 1-866-925-5454

💻 ww.good2talk.ca

Northern Ontario Gambling Research Hub

💻 www.northongamblingresearch.com

📍 Thunder Bay, ON

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